

# WATERGARDEN CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, INC.

## HURRICANE PROCEDURES

Dear Residents:

Hurricane season begins June 1<sup>st</sup> and continues through the end of November. Each approaching storm challenges and tests our skills and emotions. It is everybody's responsibility to be prepared in case of a storm hits.

We want to inform you of the WaterGarden's policy in the event of a hurricane. These policies and procedures are recommended for your building by FirstService Residential, service providers and coincides with your Board's decisions. FirstService has a responsibility and a protocol to safeguard residents, mechanical equipment and employees during a storm based on our knowledge and experience.

If you are leaving town for the summer, we recommend you gather anything loose from your balcony and store it inside of your unit. Based in our experience with Irma, many units had water intrusion through the windows and sliding glass doors. Thus, you may want to place towels near the windows and sliding glass doors. We also recommend that you make arrangements with your neighbors and/or friends to check in your unit before and after the storm as our staff will be very busy securing the building and will not be available to check into individual units. There will be no elevators running during a hurricane. If you have dog (s) and if you leave on a high floor, you may want to consider other arrangements to ensure the comfort of your pet. Pee pads may be an option as well. Pets are not permitted to urinate in the stairwell, garage or hallways.

The protocol for safe-guarding the mechanical equipment is set into motion at the time when a hurricane warning is issued to the building's geographical area. It starts with the least necessary equipment leaving the most indispensable equipment for last.

At the time of a **Hurricane Watch** – *a hurricane may threaten the area within 48 hours* – we begin securing the building. Employees are encouraged to prepare their homes in advance. However, they will enter into a rotating schedule to allow them enough time for the last-minute preparations at their home. Employees will remain at the property until hurricane preparations have been completed. All front desk personnel will automatically go on A/B shifts. (12-hour shifts).

When a **Hurricane Warning** – *hurricane force winds are expected to make landfall within 36 hours* – has been issued and after all preparations have been completed, non-essential personnel, under the direction of the manager, will leave at the end of their shifts. Typically, a mandatory evacuation order is also announced at this time in all coastal areas. This mandatory evacuation creates a critical time frame in which the staff must execute the final mechanical protocols before the storm actually reaches the building.

The essential personnel – manager, engineer and front desk staff – will remain at your property maintaining building services and assisting residents as they follow the mandatory evacuation order. When sustained winds reach 35 mph and the hurricane continues to be an imminent threat, the essential personnel in agreement with the Board of Directors, will shut down the hot water system located in the roof top to ensure personal safety under high winds condition. When sustained winds reach 45 mph and the hurricane continues to be an imminent threat, the essential personnel, in agreement with the Board of directors, will shut down the property's four main mechanical systems: **elevators, HVAC equipment, domestic water pumps and pool equipment**. This helps to assure that these systems will not be damaged as a result of operating during the storm and will be operational after conditions return to normal and power has been restored. After the shutdown has been completed, our essential personnel will follow the mandatory evacuation order issued by the appropriate governmental agency and leave the property.

FirstService will not require or encourage any employee to remain on the property in violation of an evacuation order. Any employee remaining at the property, at the request of the Board, after this shutdown, is required to

accept the terms of and sign a waiver form provided by FirstService Residential. Board signature is also required on the waiver.

Essential employees will return to the property as soon as physically possible *after sustained winds have dropped below 45 mph and an all clear has been issued.*

All other employees are required to report back to the property at daybreak and when sustained winds have dropped below 35 mph.

### **Mechanical Components Shut Down Procedure:**

#### **ELEVATORS**

The elevators will be parked on the upper floors of the building with the doors closed. (The highest possible floor is recommended by the elevator company).

Pull disconnect switch in the machine room in the off position before power fails.

Close up all vents and openings at the top of the hoist way to prevent water from getting into the elevator shaft and secure door to elevator room so that it does not fly open.

##### **WHY:**

- In the event of a coastal surge, flooding will damage the elevators and fill the pits. In addition to flooding, water damage caused by wind driven rain most likely will enter the shaft and ruin the electrical equipment on top of the cars. This kind of damage will render a building immobile for a long period of time while the elevator company repairs the equipment.
- If the elevators are running and the power is interrupted, residents may be stuck inside the cabs for long periods of time. Evidence has shown that many people suffer anxiety or heart attacks in these situations. Emergency crews will not be able to respond to 911 calls under hurricane conditions.

#### **HVAC EQUIPMENT**

Turn off power to the cooling towers and pump motors by turning off all breakers on panel to the circulating pumps.

##### **WHY:**

- The cooling towers pump motors may burn up due to lack of water circulation. Water circulation stops due to low water pressure from the city, which occurs frequently during hurricanes.
- Loss of electrical power will cause pumping stations to lose pressure. Electrical surges during the storm may also damage the pumps.
- Wind pressure blows water out of the cooling tower faster than it can be replaced.
- HVAC system in this building use PVC pipes. These pipes are located on the roof and can break in the event a wind driven object hits or falls on the pipes. Once the pipes break and water is lost out of the system, the motors can burn out.
- Condenser water pump motors are expensive and must be ordered by the HVAC contractor once they fail. Depending on availability one to several weeks of down time can be expected for repairs.

#### **DOMESTIC WATER PUMPS**

Staff will turn off power to the domestic water pumps.

##### **WHY:**

- Loss of electrical power will cause pumping stations to lose pressure. If not enough water from the city reaches the pumps, they will burn out.

#### **POOL EQUIPMENT**

Staff will turn off power to the pool and spa equipment and lower the water level in the pool and spa.

##### **WHY:**

- Loss of electrical power will cause pumps to lose pressure. If not enough water reaches the pumps, they will burn out. The chemical feeders will also shut down, causing chemical imbalances in the pools. Debris will be driven in the pool, clogging filters.

## ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

- Shutters will be placed at the lobby main doors. Building access will be through the ramp door by the management office.
- Residents garage gate and the main ramp gate will be locked in the open position (this is a Fire Marshall requirement). There will be no access through the back gates. All pedestrian gates will be locked, including the dog walk area. You can use the ramp door by the management office to go in/out with your pet.
- If you exit the building through any stairwell door you won't be able to get back in through the same door.
- Valet service will be shut down 24 hours prior to the storm hit. All vehicles parked in valet will be moved to the upper floors due to flooding in the first-floor garage. Residents with assigned parking spaces in the first floor will be allowed to park in the upper floors. Assigned parking will be temporarily suspended until after the storm and the cleanup of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor garage area. Front Desk will have the keys and a list with the location of every vehicle parked by valet.
- Guest Parking will not be available.
- If we lose power during or after the storm, the trash chute will be down. In this case, please do not leave trash bags in the hallway. After the storm, you will be able to bring your trash down to the dumpster.
- Dumpsters will be tied up to the pillars in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor garage away from the loading dock door to avoid odors from getting into the common areas.
- If the building loses power, the generator will kick in. The generator only powers some of the hallway lights, stairwell and one elevator. However, for safety reasons, the elevator will not operate before or during the storm as there won't be emergency responders for hours to assist with entrapment during the hurricane or maybe even hours after the storm is over.
- **We do NOT EVER shut off electricity to the building, that will only be done by FPL.**
- After the storm is officially over, although the mechanical equipment (including but not limited to pumps, motors, elevators, switch disconnects and cooling tower) may have no apparent water damage, service mechanics are required to restore the equipment and make any needed repairs as soon as possible.

### Helpful links

<http://www.broward.org/hurricane/Pages/Default.aspx>

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>

[https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes?utm\\_source=hp\\_promo&utm\\_medium=web&utm\\_campaign=ready](https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes?utm_source=hp_promo&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=ready)

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/>

<https://www.fortlauderdale.gov/departments/fire-rescue/hurricane-preparedness>

Sincerely,

Alessandra Hale-Florez – Community Association Manager For:  
The Board of Directors  
WaterGarden Condominium Association, Inc.